

Paterna, Spain - June 5th, 2023

MixMatters: Maximizing the value of mixed biological waste.

On June 5th and 6th, the launch and presentation of the European innovation project MixMatters will take place at the AINIA facilities in Paterna, Valencia.

The agri-food industry produces 113 million tons of biological waste per year in the European Union alone. These waste materials contain valuable compounds that can be used in food products, animal feed, and cosmetics, yet their true potential remains untapped. Approximately 75% of this biological waste ends up in landfills or incinerators, resulting in a significant waste of resources.

The challenge lies in the complexity of valorising mixed waste due to its heterogeneous nature (organic matter mixed with impurities such as plastic, cardboard, glass, metal, etc.), which hinders its complete and efficient utilization. Specifically, the mixed nature of these waste materials complicates their separation due to technical limitations in removing impurities and logistical difficulties arising from the dispersion of different agents, reducing the cost-benefit ratio of valorisation.

The European project MixMatters presents an innovative, integrated, and versatile solution for the efficient valorisation of mixed biological waste, consisting of a modular separation unit and a valorisation hub adapted to the specific waste type. Throughout the project, three demonstrations will be carried out in Spain, two of them located in Valencia and one in the Almería region. By separating and valorising 48 tons of mixed biological waste, our goal is to avoid 21 tons of annual CO₂ emissions during the demonstration phase.

Marta Benito, European Project Leader at AINIA and coordinator of the MixMatters project, stated that "Effective classification of mixed waste plays a pivotal role in meeting the EU's circular economy goals, as it empowers the valorisation of these waste streams, unleashing the potential of the agri-food industry and enhancing its competitiveness and resilience."

MixMatters is an ambitious four-year project with a budget exceeding 7 million euros, co-financed by the Circular Bio-Based Europe (CBE) joint initiative under the European program for innovation and research 'Horizon Europe 2021-2027' (HE). The consortium, led by AINIA, comprises 18 entities from 8 different countries: Spain, Denmark, Belgium, Finland, Austria, Italy, United Kingdom, and Slovenia, bringing together innovative companies, business clusters, developers of innovative technology, and market experts.

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